



## Wilderness Fellow & Researcher Position Description

Title: Wilderness Fellow, Wilderness Researcher

Reports To: SWS Program Coordinator, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Staff, USFS District Staff

Classification: Exempt

Location: Variable: Antonito & Durango, CO; Jackson Hole, WY; Milwaukee, WI; Ogden, UT; Taos, NM; Tucson, AZ

Duration: June 13 – November 30

Time: Full Time

Salary: \$500-\$600 weekly stipend

Benefits: Monthly Health Care Stipend (non-taxable, to be dispersed to a Health Savings Account) of \$100; 1 earned vacation day per month (vacation is not eligible to be cashed out at any time) and federal holidays; bunkhouse accommodations.

Closing Date: Open until filled, with application review beginning April 3.

### Partners

The Society for Wilderness Stewardship (SWS) is a non-profit organization seeking to promote excellence in the professional practice of wilderness stewardship, science, and education to ensure the life-sustaining benefits of wilderness. In other words, we are a professional society working to set the standard for wilderness management.

The Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (Leopold) is dedicated to the development and dissemination of knowledge needed to improve management of wilderness, parks, and similarly protected areas. Leopold was established in 1993 and has operated under the Rocky Mountain Research Station, and has as the wilderness research arm of federal agencies ever since. The Institute operates under an interagency agreement among the federal agencies that have wilderness management or research responsibility – the Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, National Park Service, and the US Geological Survey.

The US Forest Service was founded by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905, and today oversees 445 wilderness areas, or 33% of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Inaugural Chief of the USFS, Gifford Pinchot, stated that the USFS existed to “provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run.”

### Program Overview

The Wilderness Fellows Program is a collaborative of the three organizations above, and was created in order to complete Wilderness Character Baseline Assessments, thereby continuing important assessment work that has been underway since 2001, and fulfilling the USFS Wilderness Stewardship Performance (WSP) element “Wilderness Character Baseline”. The Wilderness Character Baseline requires that steps be made to determine a baseline and provide the foundation for evaluating trends in wilderness character. These trends indicate the outcome of management actions and success at ‘preserving wilderness character’ as directed by the Wilderness Act.

As stated in Keeping It Wild 2: An Updated Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System (Landres et. al, 2015), “the results of wilderness character monitoring provide [agency staff who manage wilderness day-to-day, and regional and national staff who develop wilderness policy and assess its effectiveness] some of the key data they need to improve wilderness stewardship and wilderness policy.” The report goes on to say that, “Implementing this monitoring strategy does not guarantee the preservation of wilderness character, but it informs and improves wilderness stewardship, and ensures managers are accountable to the central mandate of the 1964 Wilderness act – to preserve wilderness character.”

In 2001, the USFS Wilderness Monitoring Committee developed the first national framework for Wilderness Character Monitoring (WCM). Progression was attained by the USFS in 2006 with WCM pilot testing occurring in every FS region, the publication of the Applying the Concept of Wilderness Character to National Forest Planning, Monitoring and Management in 2008, and the 2009 distribution of the Technical Guide for Monitoring Selected Conditions Related to Wilderness Character.

The USFS and Leopold now stand at the brink of publishing the second generation Technical Guide (expected October 2016), a tool that promises to advance WCM across the nation. Wilderness Fellows and Researchers will apply the tools in the draft Technical Guide to carry out character assessments. Fellows will complete full assessments for targeted wilderness areas, while Researchers will complete base level work for numerous wilderness areas that will inform future targeted assessments.

#### **Position Overview**

The Wilderness Fellow Program is seeking qualified candidates to fill Wilderness Fellow and Researcher positions around the nation. The Fellows and Researchers will work at USFS locations to directly support the goals of a collaborative wilderness character monitoring initiative currently underway in the USFS.

#### **Primary Wilderness Fellow Responsibilities**

Identify wilderness character measures for USFS wilderness areas by working with the staff.  
Compile data for selected monitoring and complete components of a baseline assessment for wilderness character monitoring.  
Implement inventory and monitoring strategies for tracking wilderness character.  
Participate in a training course, work closely with USFS district and forest staff, and participate in weekly conference calls with staff from the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute (Fellows) or the Society for Wilderness Stewardship (Researchers).

#### **Key Qualifications**

Bachelor’s degree in a related field, Master’s degree preferred.  
Educational background in Wilderness Management, Protected Area/Natural Resource Management, Recreation Resource Management, Conservation Social Science, Environmental Policy, Natural, Biological and/or Physical Science.  
Deep interest in wilderness/resource management and the US Forest Service.  
Outstanding written and oral communication skills.  
Research skill and attention to detail and organization.  
Ability to work both independently and collaboratively on projects, high degree of initiative.  
Understanding and ability to use GIS.  
Results-oriented with the ability to set and follow realistic goals and objectives.  
Flexibility to adapt when faced with changing needs and priorities.  
Proficiency with Microsoft Office, comfort with technology and social media.  
Ability to travel to training and remote field locations (travel provided), and to relocate if necessary (assistance not provided).

To Apply: E-mail a resume, cover letter, and three professional or academic references to Heather MacSarrow at: [h.macslarrow@wildernessstewardship.org](mailto:h.macslarrow@wildernessstewardship.org)

Essential Functions: Employee may be required to sit, stand, and lift objects up to 50 lbs. Employee may be required to travel and camp in the backcountry, and to drive or fly to remote project locations.

**The Society for Wilderness Stewardship is an equal opportunity employer.**

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected status.